

## Rapid Response to Invasive Species in Lake Champlain's Interjurisdictional Waters

At least 40 aquatic nuisance species have been introduced into the Lake Champlain Basin. Other harmful species, including hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*) and northern snakehead (*Channa argus*) may be on the way. These species pose serious threats to indigenous natural resources and, in many cases, cause substantial ecological and economic impacts. Rapid eradication of new invasions, before they are irreversible, is an important government responsibility. However, the interstate, international character of Lake Champlain requires that agencies coordinate activities among federal, provincial, state and local management agencies. Cooperative decision-making is needed to acknowledge responsibilities of a lead agency while allowing for other agencies and jurisdictions in the watershed to ensure they are fully meeting their responsibilities. The establishment of an interagency task force to address questions and facilitate decisions concerning the technical, economic, and political feasibility of eradicating new species invasions is an important consideration. This presentation describes the challenges associated with an ongoing process to develop interjurisdictional rapid response capability in the Lake Champlain Basin.